

REMARKS

Claims 1- 27 were pending and under consideration.

In the office action, Claims 1-7, 11, 15-24, 26 and 27 were rejected.

With this Amendment, Claims 7, 9, 10, 11, 13 - 15, and 23 are amended, and Claims 1-6, 8, 12, 17-22, and 25 are cancelled.

Accordingly, Claims 7, 9-16, 23, 24, and 26-27 are now at issue.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 102 Anticipation Rejection of Claims

Claims 1-3, 17, 18, 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Koyama (US Patent 6382852).

Claims 1-3 and 17-19 have been cancelled. As such, their rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) are now moot.

II. 35 U.S.C. § 102 Anticipation Rejection of Claims

Claims 4-6, 7, 16, 20-22, 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Kono et al. (JP 07-052428).

Claims 4-6 and 20-22 have been cancelled. As such, their rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) are now moot.

Claims 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 25 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As such, Claim 7, 9, 13, and 23 have been amended by incorporating the substantive limitations of corresponding Claim 8, 7, and 25. Thus, independent Claims 7, 9, 13, and 23 are allowable.

Moreover, Claims 10, 11, and 14, 15, and 16 have been amended to reflect their dependencies on Claims 7, 9, and 13. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the claim rejections pursuant to 35 USC 102(b) be withdrawn.

III. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claims

Claims 11, 15, 24, 26, 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Kono et al. in view of Koyama. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As stated above, independent Claims 7 and 23 are allowable due to their respective amendments. Thus, corresponding dependent Claims 11, 15, 24, 26, and 27 are also allowable.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the claim rejections pursuant to 35 USC 103(a) be withdrawn.

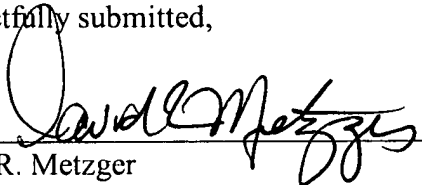
Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that Claims 7, 9-11, and 13 - 16, 23, 24, and 26-27 are clearly allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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